



News for Immediate Release

November 18, 2011

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DWR Announces Initial Water Delivery Estimate for 2012

SACRAMENTO -- The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today announced an initial allocation of 60 percent of requested deliveries to State Water Project contractors for 2012.

The initial allocation -- or water delivery estimate -- is always conservative because it is made before the major winter storms that supply reservoir storage.

Today's initial 60 percent allocation is relatively high due to carryover storage from unusually wet conditions last winter.

"We are off to a promising start for next year's water supply," said DWR Director Mark Cowin. "We are cautious not to be overly optimistic, but last winter's near-record snowpack and rainfall promises that even average precipitation this winter should give us adequate supplies for our farms, cities and businesses."

Lake Oroville in Butte County, the State Water Project's principal storage reservoir with a capacity of 3.5 million acre-feet, is at 80 percent of capacity with 2,825,422 acre-feet held in Lake Oroville. That is 130 percent of normal for the date.

Just a normal winter will significantly increase today's allocation of 60 percent of the slightly more than 4 million acre-feet requested by the 29 public agencies (contractors) that supply water to more than 25 million Californians and nearly a million acres of irrigated farmland.

This year is an example of how conservative, early water delivery estimates can be expected to increase as storms roll in. The initial allocation for this calendar year, made in November of 2010, was 25 percent. As winter took hold, a near-record snowpack and heavy rains sweeping the state resulted in a final allocation of 80 percent of requests. The final allocation was 50 percent in 2010, 40 percent in 2009,

35 percent in 2008, and 60 percent in 2007. The last 100 percent allocation -- difficult to achieve even in wet years because of Delta pumping restrictions to protect threatened and endangered fish -- was in 2006.

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

Contact the [DWR Public Affairs Office](#) for more information about DWR's water activities.